In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A surge arrester, ~~(1)~~ comprising:

a stack ~~(10)~~ of a plurality of cylindrical varistor blocks ~~(10a), preferably made of metal oxide~~, which are arranged one after the other in the axial direction of the varistor blocks ~~(10a)~~,

an upper end electrode ~~(11)~~ and a lower end electrode ~~(12)~~,

clamping members ~~(15)~~ of least three loops ~~(15a)~~, which connect the upper electrode ~~(12)~~, wherein insulating material comprising at of continuously wound glass ~~fibre~~ fiber, end electrode ~~(11)~~ to the lower end each of said loops ~~(15a)~~ comprises a first and a second strand,

a bursting-protective bandage ~~(16)~~ in the form of a plurality of rings or bands ~~(16a)~~ wound of ~~fibre~~ fiber, said bandage (16) radially surrounding the varistor stack ~~(10)~~ and the clamping loops ~~(15a)~~, and

a surrounding, electrically insulating, outer casing ~~(19)~~ of rubber or other polymeric material,

~~characterized in that~~

a first cross section ~~(V)~~ of the first strand is mirror symmetric to a second cross section ~~(H)~~ of the second strand, and ~~that~~ wherein a symmetry axis of the first cross section is inclined to a corresponding symmetry axis of the second cross section.

2. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The surge arrester ~~(1)~~ according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the asymmetrical cross sections of the loops ~~(15a)~~ are shaped and located so that not

only two corners, one on either strand, make contact with the varistor stack ~~(10)~~.

3. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The surge arrester (1) according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the asymmetrical cross sections of the loops ~~(15a)~~ are adapted to increase the contact surface against the varistor stack ~~(10)~~.

4. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The surge arrester ~~(1)~~ according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the asymmetrical cross sections of the loops ~~(15a)~~ are adapted to shorten the free span of the rings or bands ~~(16a)~~ inside the loops ~~(15a)~~.

5. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The surge arrester ~~(1)~~ according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the asymmetrical cross sections of the loops ~~(15a)~~ are adapted to enable the rings or bands ~~(16a)~~ to be wound closer to the stack ~~(10)~~.

6. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The surge arrester ~~(1)~~ according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the asymmetrical cross sections of the loops ~~(15a)~~ are adapted such that the shapes of the rings or bands ~~(16a)~~ become approximately circular.

7. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The surge arrester ~~(1)~~ according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the cross sections of the loops ~~(15a)~~ essentially correspond to two mirror-inverted rhombs or rhomboids ~~(V, H)~~.

8. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The surge arrester ~~(1)~~ according to ~~any if the preceding~~

~~claims, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the rings or bands ~~(16a)~~ are wound of aramide ~~fibre~~ fiber or PBO ~~fibre~~ fiber with an epoxy or vinyl ester matrix.

9. (new) The surge arrester according to claim 1, wherein the varistor blocks are made of metal oxide.